

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 RSR-01 /115 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 087

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7685

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VT, PA

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STROESSNER'S PAPAL AUDIENCE

REF: ROME 7447

1. AT CASTEL GANDOLFO JULY 25 PRESIDENT STROESSNER HAD HALF-HOUR PRIVATE AUDIENCE ALONE WITH POPE PAUL AFTER WHICH OTHER MEMBERS OF OFFICIAL PARTY PRESENTED TO POPE. VATICAN HAS INFORMED US THAT POPE PAUL STRESSED TO HIS GUEST HOPE THAT CHURCH IN PARAGUAY WOULD BE PERMITTED GREATER FREEDOM TO FULFILL ITS MISSION. SOURCE NOTED THAT POPE HAD PARTICULARLY IN MIND TASK OF LOCAL BISHOPS TO IDENTIFY ABUSES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND APPEAL FOR THEIR ELIMINATION. THE POPE ALSO ASKED THAT GOP EXERCISE CLEMENCY TOWARD PERSONS DETAINED FOR POLITICAL CRIMES. STROESSNER DID NOT REPEAT NOT GIVE PONTIFF ASSURANCES ON LATTER REQUEST, BUT MOST INTERESTINGLY, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, NEITHER DID HE DENY EXISTENCE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN PARAGUAY OR TRY TO DEFINE SUCH PERSONS AS NORMAL CRIMINALS.

2. DURING MASSIVE GENERAL AUDIENCE JULY 25, POPE PAUL MADE SPECIAL STATEMENT IN SPANISH TO GROUP OF PARAGUAYANS WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED PRESIDENT STROESSNER ON HIS EUROPEAN TRIP. IN ADDITION TO WORDS OF WELCOME, POPE URGED HIS GUESTS TO PRACTICE THAT FAITH WHICH "LEADS TO A SINCERE DIALOGUE IN A SPIRIT

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OF FRATERNAL COLLABORATION AT THE MOMENT OF SHARING RESPONSI-

BILITIES IN THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITIES." VOLPE

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Message Attributes

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